

Gibler Gives Jail Time for Medicaid Fraud Charge

Age and employment status proves beneficial in court

By Erika Kirsch
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WALLACE — A letter written to District I Court Judge Fred Gibler by a defendant's mother did the defendant no good, said both Gibler and Shoshone County Prosecuting Attorney Michael Peacock during Law Day proceedings on Monday.

Karl Slatten Jr., 24, was charged with two counts of Medicaid provider fraud for providing and billing for care that he wasn't authorized or trained to do so. Slatten will serve 90 days local jail time. He will have a five-year sentence, two years fixed and three years indeterminate. Slatten will also be required to pay restitution and it's possible his probation will be extended to ensure the restitution payments will be completed.

"That letter works against him," Peacock said. "He needs to take responsibility for his own life, he needs to be accountable."

The letter written by Slatten's mother blames Slatten's employer for the crime Slatten committed, Gibler said. However, Gibler took into account Slatten's age and his current employment status when the sentence was handed down. This was also Slatten's first offense, which swayed the sentencing.

"I'm taking into consideration your age and that you are now employed," Gibler said. "I'm imposing local jail time so that you understand the consequences of your actions."

As long as Slatten is still employed he will be allowed to serve his 90 days of jail time on the weekends, Gibler said.

"I do take full responsibility," Slatten said. "Even though this wasn't intentional, I do know a crime was committed and I do take full responsibility and accept the punishment."

"You can't just float around and take people's word for things," Peacock said.